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MORE THOUGHTS ON POST-CLASSICAL LATIN

In a recent commemorative issue, the one-thousandth number of CLASSICAL WEEKLY, there appeared two interesting articles by Professors Harrington and Cosenza dealing with the wider adoption of post-classical Latin studies in the college curriculum. Professor Harrington wrote that he was conducting his personal campaign back in 1907, but, despite its venerability, his plea seems to have a special urgency for the trying period that will inevitably follow the end of the war. During this readjustment period all humanistic studies will again be subjected to scrutiny and reappraised for utilitarian values. We are all apprehensive about what post-war attitudes towards the humanities will be.

To the young man whose most recent classroom experience was a briefing session before leaving for a bombing mission over Germany or Japan much of the academic trivia (and quadrivia) that he left behind is going to seem to be utter boredom. In his impatience to make up for lost time and to find his place in the post-war economy he is going to spurn much of the traditional program. And it will behoove us to ponder how much of what he spurns is really worth our struggle to preserve, and to speculate about the possibility of such attitudes persisting after the readjustment period.

The years of war preparation and participation following immediately upon the depression years have made this generation of students a practical-minded one. We classicists can derive what satisfaction we may from the knowledge that all the humanities are under the same pressure. The teachers of modern languages are planning to alter their courses in the light of experience gained in teaching men in uniform. They are aware of the weaknesses of courses given in concentrated doses and realize that the claims made for the intensive study of foreign languages are greatly exaggerated; but they also know that the students appreciate the good features of the wartime program and

that many of them feel that the time they devoted to language study under the old system could have yielded more satisfactory results. There is an increasing tendency among modern-language students to seek two objectives from their courses: a reading ability that will enable them to cope with more difficult styles, including technical writing, and an ability to converse with native speakers. The language programs of the uniformed services made the latter virtually the sole objective. This means that literature courses will suffer and will have to await a time when economic conditions become more stabilized before they will be able to resume their former place.

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It is questionable whether the belletristic courses will ever again receive the emphasis they received before the war. Literary values are changing and literature is assuming a broader scope. Darwin's Origin of Species and Churchill's speeches are considered outstanding examples of good "literature." The chief factor in making them outstanding is of course that they have something to say. Both men were aware of the moment of their thoughts and took care to express them to the best of their ability. As scientists, technicians and men of action assume a more prominent place in public life, there will be an increasing tendency to look upon the more significant of their writings as literature.

Granted that these observations are valid or partially valid, what bearing do they have upon the future of Latin studies? It seems quite likely that in increasing proportions those students who elect Latin will do so because of its importance either as a basis of teaching other languages or as a research tool in another field of the humanities. If we deplore the emphasis recently given by students to utilitarian motives, we should regard as compensatory their forthrightness. The impact of the sciences is making them more honest and causing them to eschew opinions and to seek facts, and to form their own judgment. Traditions are being challenged and cant is disappearing. The study of the Latin language must surely benefit from this change. When it has completely rid itself of the last vestiges of the favoritism shown it because it was the foundation of the mediaeval curriculum and comes to be recognized for what it is—the primary requisite for throwing light upon two millennia of western culture—it will rest upon a firm basis.

The character of Latin literature is such as to lend itself readily to these changing demands. The ancient Romans were themselves so preeminently practical that we must all have felt the artificiality of approaching their literature in the same spirit as we approached Greek literature. In making Latin courses conform to courses in the Greek department we were compelled to pad and to inject authors whose works by no stretch of the imagination could be called literary. We had no Homer; instead we began with the Twelve Tables and the tombstone inscriptions. Frequently the Monumentum Ancyranum found its way into literature courses. The student was quick to appreciate literary merit and to detect its absence. He was becoming increasingly impatient with the opinions of critics, however gifted they might be. It was far from convincing, when he was wading through a dull, almost unreadable chapter, to have the professor read to him a lyrical passage from Mackail praising the literary qualities of the author before him.

A large proportion of the extant corpus of Latin writers is non-literary, and yet many of these works are extremely valuable documents. We read the unpoetical sections of De Rerum Natura as well as the lyrical passages, for content. One of the most precious documents preserved from classical antiquity, the Naturalis Historia of Pliny the Elder, is a weird collection of scribblings to anyone but an anthropologist or historian. The catalogue of Latin writers is full of such examples. If we have already seen fit to admit authors and works of this sort into our courses, it should be a relatively simple matter for us to adjust ourselves to changing trends and to give greater emphasis to content and less to what is regarded as literature by arbitrary standards.

There were in the Middle Ages, and more especially in the Renaissance, authors writing in Latin who were far more brilliant than many of the classical authors we venerate. Their minds were stimulated at the time of their writing by the knowledge that they for the first time had grasped hold of some great truth or discovery. If some of the energy we expend in trying to inculcate in the student an appreciation for a less gifted Roman author were to be spent on a preliminary perusal of the more memorable achievements of the mediaeval and Renaissance minds, the result could hardly be anything but salutary. It is not enough to tell the student that if he masters Ciceronian syntax and browses through a mediaeval and Renaissance

anthology, he will be able to tackle any late author. Students of this generation are used to practical demonstration in other courses and unless they are shown, they are likely to remain skeptical. It will entail the conducting of advanced courses in the library or the transcribing or mimeographing of sufficient copies of text. The student will not have to be persuaded, when he is reading for instance the letter of Copernicus dedicating his great work to Paul III, that what he is reading is worthy of his time and effort. And the professor, as he pulls down a dusty folio volume, will experience the thrill of a papyrologist, for in many cases he will be the first scholar of the present century to give serious thought to an exceedingly important work. Only recently Copernicus' short dedicatory letter, although it stands at the head of his De Revolutionibus, yielded up an obvious and important observation which had hitherto passed unnoticed.

The classicist is fully justified in regarding works of any later period written in Latin as his rightful province, for they have suffered from extreme neglect. The field of mediaeval and Renaissance Latin is in comparison with the classical field almost virgin territory. Chalcidius, Martianus Capella, Cassiodorus, Bede, Boethius, and Isidore of Seville, the writers who form the intellectual background of western Europe almost to the Renaissance, are virtually unread and many of their important works unedited in this generation or century. If you consult the tray of a reputable library for Martianus Capella, for example, who is by common consent one of the leading authorities of the Middle Ages, in some periods the leading authority, you are likely to find listed a Teubner text and one or two early printed editions.

The same is true for the Renaissance. Vesalius' De Fabrica Humani Corporis and Copernicus' De Revolutionibus, the works which mark the beginning of the modern era of medicine and astronomy, are still awaiting an English translator. Last year was the fourth centenary of the publication of both works. The New York Academy of Medicine held a meeting celebrating the Vesalius centenary, in which a large auditorium was filled. The lectures and ensuing discussion were brilliant. Some of the leading American historians of medicine were present, among them enthusiastic collectors of early Vesalius editions. The last authority scheduled to participate in the discussion asked for a showing of the hands of those who could honestly say they had read substantial portions of De Fabrica in the original. Not a hand was raised. This is what comes of a Latin-less age. It is true that the present generation can claim credit for calling attention to the significance of these two revolutionary works. The monumental eleventh edition of the Encyclopaedia Britannica devotes a single column to Copernicus and does not even list Vesalius! But the wide honor paid to these great men today is a layman's acknowledgment and

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does not come from a true understanding of their achievements but from an improved perspective of the

whole field of the history of those sciences.

As the sciences make their influence more strongly felt, there will be a growing demand for precise information obtained at first hand, and a greater premium will be put upon the training and skills that can extract that information and less reliance will be placed upon second-hand opinions. Some day in the not-toodistant future the Latinist will achieve his proper place. He will be regarded neither as necessarily brilliant because he pores over difficult texts, nor an eccentric fool. His mastery of the language will be his tool for adding to human knowledge as the microscope is to the chemist and biologist and the telescope to the astronomer. He will be neither more nor less respected than other professionals and highly trained technicians, because additions to all fields of human knowledge will be cherished. The more leisure time future technology will afford, the greater will be the favor shown to the arts and letters.

For the present it would seem to be wise to emphasize the utilitarian aspects of Latin. This scheme would rest upon a sound training in fundamentals, syntax, and a reading ability, but facility as well as thoroughness will have to be developed; otherwise the plan will collapse. The service man who has sweated over Japanese kana will look upon the Latin language as delightfully simple. There must be no prejudices raised against vulgarisms and deviations from the classical norm. The primary consideration will be whether something significant is being said and to determine what it is. The advanced program would of course include training in mediaeval and Renaissance bibliography and research.

We may be confident that the litterae humaniores Latinae will once again achieve an important place in the college curriculum. This will come about when the prospect of a favorable economic future for youth is at hand, when they no longer come into the classroom obsessed with apprehensions about making a living. As technology advances and affords better living conditions, the desire for cultural development will grow. We have already seen ample proof of this. Standards of scholarship will improve, and as they do, greater emphasis will be put upon Latin. The Latin-less mediaevalist, or professor of modern languages or literature, or of philosophy will some day be regarded as the monstrum prodigiosum that he is. For nearly two millennia the leading representatives of western culture grew up with a classical background, often to the exclusion of all other education. We cannot hope to appreciate their thoughts unless we have some of the training and the intimate grasp of classical civilization that they had. The professor who spends a lifetime in the study of one of these authors and who has never had training in the classics will always find a barrier interposed between his beloved author and himself.

The responsibility rests upon us of training a future generation of scholars who will be able to approach their fields with a feeling of self-assurance and self-respect. This communicator agrees with Professor Harrington that we have every reason to be assertive and not apologetic about the place of the classics in education. Our assertiveness must of course take a constructive and forward-looking direction and not be a plea for a return to the past—something that is as undesirable as it is impossible of realization.

WILLIAM H. STAHL

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

TO THE QUESTION OF ALLEGED SENECAN TRAGEDIES

The following is a restatement (in part translated and in part summarized) of an article published in the Hebrew magazine Tarbiz. It deserves a wider public among students of classical literature, many of whom have shown an interest in other studies by the same author. It is the work of Dr. Armand Kaminka, now of Tel Aviv, widely known for his works in the field of the Hellenistic period of Jewish history. Besides his translation into Hebrew of Seneca's Moralia referred to at the opening of his article, I may mention among his other translations tragedies from Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides, and the letters of Marcus Aurelius.

In the essay on the life of Seneca and his ideas which I put at the beginning of the third volume of his works when I translated them into Hebrew, I mentioned only briefly that tragedies are ascribed to Seneca, "but some consider them a forgery." I added that there was

a hypothesis that Seneca may have assisted his pupil, the emperor Nero, in writing tragedies, but the extant tragedies are not those works. Adding that there are those who find none of the proffered reasons against the authenticity of the tragedies convincing enough, I explained my opinion that the lack of reference to them in other works of Seneca's was a weighty argument. If the tragedies were Seneca's, there was often an opportunity for him to refer to them in his other works that Seneca, fond of adorning his Dialogues with verses of poetry, would not have overlooked. But there is no such citation.

There are other reasons for not attributing the tragedies to Seneca, and among them is one which I now find most convincing. A man as prolific and original in ideas as Seneca and as well versed in miraculous incidents and stirring legends from the lives

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of all peoples and all generations would not have needed, if he had wished to compose tragedies, to repeat stories with which Sophocles and Euripides had already dealt. Seneca would have used material new to tragic poetry and more suitable to his own nature and tastes. What the ancient tragedies contribute to the plays associated with Seneca's name has been selected by no one so sensitive as Seneca. He would not have presented on the open stage Medea's killing of her own son (instead of describing it, as Euripides does, offstage), or the cruel acts of the demented Hercules or the scene in which Thyestes eats the flesh of his children and drinks their blood. All these are scenes that could be enjoyed by a coarse man of cruel inclinations (like Nero, perhaps, of whom it is known that he considered himself an artist and a poet), but not by a man like Seneca, full of mercy and sympathy, whose only mention of murders and other abominable deeds in his meditative books is for the sake of censuring them. It would not have been possible for Seneca to make a topic of abomination without presenting some logical circumscription to attenuate the depressing impression that wrong leaves. Yet Seneca was a man capable of inserting into a poem (perhaps into the work of such a man as Nero) some verses that would make the Chorus comment on the vanity of those who hunt for glory and wealth or on the lack of confidence in wealth. There are choral passages of such a nature in Hercules Furens and Thyestes, respectively.

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In expressing his doubt of Seneca's authorship of the extant tragedies, A. Albrecht remarks on their remoteness from good taste ("Geschmacksverirrungen," Römische Literaturgeschichte, Leipzig 1938, 2.177) with the comment that it is possible that Seneca was the name of the author of the plays, but that perhaps it was the father of Lucius Annaeus, the orator Marcus Annaeus, or even some other author of that name. He reminds us vigorously also that Quintilian mentions among the works of the philosopher Seneca only songs (poemata), and that Quintilian had no reason to avoid mention of tragedies if there had been any among the philosopher's works. And further, continues Albrecht, there is no hint from Seneca himself that he wrote tragedy or anything of the nature of the surviving tragedies.

Léon Herrmann, on the other hand, in a scholarly edition of the text of the tragedies (Paris 1924) considers that there is unanimous agreement on Seneca's authorship of the nine tragedies that are based on topics from Greek legend. Professor Herrmann intended to publish a separate special study of the topic of their authorship. I do not know that he has ever published it. But his concern is with the text, which he has arranged with much philological subtlety, and with external form and literary features of the composition. These features will not answer the question of the authorship of the plays. It is, in my opinion, a

question to be decided on factors of the relation between Seneca's ideas and those expressed in the tragedies.

We know Seneca's thoughts on the more important subjects, on the soul, for instance, and on the mind of man and its destiny. These thoughts we can compare with the ideas put into the mouths of characters who are not forced to talk according to the requirements of their dramatic rôles. We can, that is, make a comparison between Seneca's acknowledged views and those uttered by the Choruses whose function is to express the settled opinion of the spectators and the author's own point of view.

It is sufficient, then, to concentrate upon comprehending the central thought in Seneca's tenets, the thought he expresses upon the soul and spirit of man. In the letter of consolation to Marcia (of the time of Caligula, about the year 40) he writes: "Souls range far aloft throughout the universe and from there look down in scorn upon human affairs." Souls that are great strive to break away from their prison of distress in earthly life (Cons. 23; the idea comes from Plato, but it is extended); "man, after having been buried, ascends aloft and hurries to join the souls of the blessed" (25). To his mother he writes from exile: "The soul is holy and eternal (animus sacer et aeternus)" and in the Morals (57): "As the soul survives the body, it cannot disappear entirely (nullo genere perire posse)." At another place (90), philosophy teaches "what the souls are that ascend to become heavenly beings (in secundam numinum fornam)" or "where the place of the soul is when freed from the ties of human servitude." Seneca's answer to the latter question is similar to that of the Talmud (Maxims 4.1; cf. Ep. 65), "As the Lord fills the whole world, the soul fills the whole body."

In contrast to this view so often expressed, let us see what the Chorus says in one of the tragedies attributed to Seneca. In Troades (371-4):

verum est, an timidos fabula decipit umbras corporibus vivere conditis? Post mortem nihil est obnoxia corpori nec parcens animal.

The question, "Is it truth, or is it an idle story" is not like Seneca, who shows the loftiness and brilliance of the thoughts he could have introduced into this poetic passage. "After death is nothing, etc." could not have been written by Seneca. It is a statement contradictory to all his thinking on the subject of the ascendancy of the soul in man. The French editor calls this choral passage (57), "un curieux développement philosophique niant l'immortalité de l'âme." It is not merely "curieux," it is a philosophy impossible to associate with the mind of Seneca.

ERIC FISHER

WASHINGTON

MEMORANDA

A regional meeting of the American Philological Association was held at Saint Louis University the afternoon of December 16. Attendance included the following nineteen members: William F. Arndt, Concordia Serminary; Richard Eugene Arnold, S.J., St. Louis University; Clemens P. Buetzler, S.J., St. Louis University; Norman J. DeWitt, Washington University; Thomas S. Duncan, Washington University; Sister M. Edmond Fern, Webster College; Chauncey E. Finch, St. Louis University; Sister Mary Optata Heine, Notre Dame High School; Sister M. Reginald Helmsing, Notre Dame Junior College; Walter A.

Jennrich, Washington University; Ruth F. Joedicke, Mary Institute; James A. Kleist, S.J., St. Louis University; William C. Korfmacher, St. Louis University; Sister Francis de Chantal McLeese, Webster College; Sister M. Lelia Pond, Notre Dame Junior College; George V. Schick, Concordia Seminary; Eugene Tavenner, Washington University; John A. Taylor, S.J., St. Louis University; and George R. Throop, Washington University.

Papers were read by Professors Duncan, Finch, DeWitt, Arndt, and Korfmacher, who also acted as secretary of the session. Papers were followed by dis-

REVIEWS

Augustine on the Teaching of History. By WILLIAM M. GREEN. Pages 315-32. University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1944 (University of California Publications in Classical Philology, Volume 12, No. 18) \$0.25

Professor Green's study of a plan originated by Augustine for instruction in history is important not only to students of Augustine, but to students of the history of education and of the history of history.

His paper considers what sort of "history" was taught in Augustine's time, describes the plan he originated and developed, and gives examples of its later use (315). Augustine's life belongs to the classroom in which literature and rhetoric were the core of the curriculum. Other subjects were introduced casually, either to explain passages read, or for information useful to the orator. "History" as knowledge of the past was about as indefinite as the vague group of "liberal arts" and "disciplines" every educated person was supposed to know. The rhetor taught the writings of the historians as models of prose or for illustrations (316).

The lack of adherence to truth in history was disturbing to Augustine as a teacher. Once a Christian this laxity became more disquieting to him. He saw that history must be viewed in a more critical light, a line drawn between truth and error, a distinction made between true history, fable, rumor, or conjecture. He would test the statements of historians by a new standard of truth-agreement or disagreement with the Bible, which then became the basic textbook for learning the events of the past (319).

Augustine as a priest and later as Bishop of Hippo, showed great concern in the preparation of candidates for baptism and the priesthood. The methods and content he prescribed are set forth in his well-known De Catechizandis Rudibus and De Doctrina Christiana.

Content included history, of course. Augustine's method in general was to deliver a discourse showing God's dealings with men from Creation down to the present, making constant reference to Bible history (320). Instruction in Bible history itself was no novelty originated by Augustine. The Church had used that history as a factual basis for her faith. Augustine's originality consisted chiefly in extending the content to be taught from biblical history to universal history.

As a Manichean, Augustine had been unable to accept the Old Testament, but at his conversion Ambrose had satisfied him that the apparent absurdities were symbols of truth and were to be taken allegorically. Upon his return to Africa after his conversion Augustine became involved in a controversy with the Manicheans over the historicity of the Old Testament and under circumstances, detailed by Professor Green, which seem to mark him clearly as the inventor of "the new scheme of history which was to dominate the teaching of that subject for a thousand years."

Professor Green points out two aspects which mark the novelty of the scheme; one as opposed to the casual instruction gvien in the pagan schools, and the other as opposed to the Jewish and Christian notion of six thousand years, without a natural division into ages, representing important crises of Bible history. Augustine found this plan convenient, since it gave a clear plan of Bible history. Furthermore, it left a continuation of history until the end of time. "History and revelation," says Professor Green, "merge into one symmetrical pattern in which the believer has his own stable place fixed in the Eternity of God's beneficent purpose" (325). As continuators of Augustine's plan of teaching history, Professor Green cites, besides two contemporaries, the later writers, Isidore of Seville, Bede, and Hugo of St. Victor (328-31).

Professor Green presents the facts in support of his

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argument clearly and conclusively. His paper contributes information not hitherto stressed by Augustine's many commentators and unknown, or at least unappreciated, by historians of education and of history. Documentation is abundant and pertinent.

SISTER MARY JOHN HOLMAN

URSULINE ACADEMY, GALVESTON

La Belgique romaine. Bq Jacques Breuer. 123 pages. La Renaissance du Livre, Brussels 1944 (Collection "Notre Passé")

This thin little volume, written by the Conservateur des Musées Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire as an introduction to the subject, is entirely professional in its approach and is devoid of local prejudices. The first part deals briefly with the sources, the early history in clear chronology, and the pattern of empire. The meat lies in the second part of the text (41-100) wherein the author reviews the subjects of money, road system, centers of population, cemeteries, art, religion and commerce. He manages to indicate the credibility of evidence in each topic. But the real contribution is found in the annotated bibliography (8 pages, small type) of some 100-odd items. With the exception of certain references to classic studies, all are to very recent works. In some cases the works are in press or in composition. The frontispiece, a bas-relief from Arlon, is the only illustration. For this fact the author apologizes, and decries the times that make that limitation necessary.

LESTER K. BORN, CAPTAIN, CAC

BELGIUM

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

For the period of Dr. Casson's absence on naval duty, this department is being conducted by Dr. Bluma L. Trell of Hunter College from such publishers' lists and announcements as become available. Books received at the Editorial Offices for review are also listed. Prices are not confirmed.

Homer, Rachel, Bespaloff, De l'Iliade, 91 pages. Brentano, New York 1943 \$1

George Melville Bolling. The Athetized Lines of the Iliad. 200 pages. Linguistic Society of America, Baltimore 1944 (Special Publications of the Linguistic Society of America Edited by Bernard Bloch, Albert C. Baugh, M. B. Emenau, Robert A. Hall, Jr.)

Horace, HAROLD B. JAFFEE. Horace: An Essay in Poetic Therapy. iv, 101 pages. University of Chicago, Chicago 1944 (Dissertation)

Plato. HAROLD CHERNISS. The Riddle of the Early Academy. (viii,) 103 pages. University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1944 \$1.50

Thucydides. D. CACLAMANOS. Thucydides and Modern Politics. 14 pages. Barmerlea, London 1943 1 s.

— Thucydides' History of the Peloponnesian War Translated and Edited by Sir RICHARD LIVINGSTONE, 400 pages. Oxford University Press, London

1943 (World's Classics Series) 3 s.

Virgil. W. JACKSON KNIGHT. Roman Virgil. 348
pages. Faber, London 1944 15 s.

William of Tyre. A History of Deeds Done Beyond the Sea by William Archbishop of Tyre. Translated and Annotated by ΕΜΙLΥ ΑΤWATER ΒΑΒCOCK and A. C. Krey. xii, 556, 553 pages, 2 maps. Columbia University Press, New York 1943 \$13.50

LITERARY HISTORY. CRITICISM

Arrowsmith, R. Latin Verse Through the Ages. 56 pages. Blackie, London 1943 2 s.

Baldwin, T. W. William Shakespeare's Small Latine and Lesse Greeke. 2 vols. 1550 pages. University of Illinois Press, Urbana 1944 \$15.75

Boas, F. S. Aspects of Classical Legend and History in Shakespeare. 28 pages. Oxford University Press, London 1943 (British Academy Shakespeare Lecture) 3 s.

CARMODY, FRANCIS J. Quotations in the Latin Physiologus from Latin Bibles Earlier than the Vulgate. University of California Press, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1944 (University of California Publications in Classical Philology, Volume 13, No. 1) \$0.25

FLEWETT, H. W. and W. E. P. PANTIN. First Book of Latin Poetry. 256 pages. Macmillan, London 1943 3 s.

HARSH, РИПЛР WHALEY. A Handbook of Classical Drama. xii, 526 pages. Stanford University Press, California 1944 \$4

LE COMTE, EDWARD S. Endymion in England. xiv, 189 pages. King's Crown Press, New York 1944 \$2.25 MOLONEY, MICHAEL FRANCIS. John Donne, His Flight from Mediaevalism. 223 pages. University of Illinois Press, Urbana 1944 (Illinois Studies in Language and Literature, Vol. XXIX. Nos. 2-3) \$2.50

OATES, WHITNEY JENNINGS and CHARLES THEOPH-ILUS MURPHY. Greek Literature in Translation. 1088 pages. Longmans, New York 1944 \$5

RICHARDSON, LAWRENCE, JR. . Poetical Theory in Republican Rome. An Analytical Discussion of the Shorter Narrative Poems Written in Latin During the First Century Before Christ. 173 pages. Yale University Press, New Haven 1944 (Undergraduate Prize Essays, No. 5) \$1

SHEPPARD, J. T. The Relevance of Greak Poetry. 32 pages. Oxford University Press, London 1943 (Classical Association Address) 8 d.

HISTORY. SOCIAL STUDIES

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